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News Release

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Hastings man pleads guilty to filing a false tax return

A 28-year-old Hastings man pleaded guilty today in federal court to one count of filing a false tax return.

Justin Roy Stewart entered his plea on May 7 in St. Paul before United States District Court Judge Paul Magnuson. Stewart was charged on April 13.

According to his plea agreement, Stewart admitted that on July 16, 2007, he electronically filed a false tax return for the tax year 2006. On the return, Stewart admitted failing to report approximately \$49,034 in income he had received from services he rendered to B&R Cattle and Trucking. The tax loss for 2006, based on the additional \$49,034, is approximately \$18,207.

Stewart also admitted filing false tax returns for the tax years 2004 and 2005. The tax loss for the tax years 2004, 2005 and 2006 is approximately \$41,335 (\$16,916 for 2005 and \$6,212 for 2004). The total approximate amount of unreported income for the years 2004 through 2006 is \$117,842.

The plea agreement states that B&R Cattle and Trucking made car payments on Stewart's personal vehicle, which resulted in income that Stewart knowingly failed to report on his income tax returns. Stewart also admitted including a number of false deductions on his tax returns.

Stewart faces a potential maximum penalty of three years in prison. Judge Magnuson will determine Stewart's sentence at a future date. This case is the result of an investigation by the IRS-Criminal Investigation Division and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicole A. Engisch.